NOVA SCOTIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
CO-OPERATIVES BRANCH

Co-operative Housing A Guide for Members

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4. **You and the Residential Tenancies Act**
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6. **Care of your Housing Unit**
7. **Security and Fire Safety**

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Prepared in cooperation with:
Nova Scotia Association of Housing Co-operative
Co-operative Housing Federation of Nova Scotia
NS Department of Housing and Municipal Affairs

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1. YOU AND YOUR HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE

- Your housing Co-operative is incorporated under the Provincial Co-operatives Act. It was started by people from your community who joined together to provide their own housing through joint ownership. Your Co-operative continues to operate to provide a secure, affordable home designed to suit the members needs in a strong community environment.

- Members who occupy the Co-operative are its members. Each member has one vote at membership meetings. Their major responsibility is to elect a Board, usually 5 - 7 members, to identify the needs of the Co-operative and its members and to set policies for the efficient and effective operation of the Co-operative.

- Members pay a monthly housing charge to cover the cost of the mortgage, taxes and all operating expenses. Housing charges will rise only as costs increase.

- Members are expected to serve on committees for member selection, maintenance, finance and member relations. Each member is eligible for election to the Board of Directors. Members are expected to attend members meetings where they participate in major decisions. Staff or other professionals may be hired to staff to manage aspects of the Co-operative's business but the control of the Co-operative rests with the Board who are trustees of the members.

- Members do not and will not own the units they occupy but lease them from the Co-operative.

- The Co-operative may be financed by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and administered by the Provincial Department of Housing and Municipal Affairs. Together they may provide assistance to housing Co-operatives to lower the costs for members who cannot afford market rents.

- Potential members are interviewed and contacted when units become available. They must show willingness to participate in the Co-operative through committees and member meetings. Members will be required to pay a minimal membership deposit which will be refunded when the member leaves the Co-operative.

- The Co-operative Housing Federation both Provincial and Federal bodies are the organized voice of the Co-operative housing movement. They represent, serve and support housing Co-operatives and are active in the wider Co-operative movement provincially and in development efforts abroad.

Co-operative Housing Federation of NS
3045 Robie Street Suite 305
Halifax NS B3K 4P6
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Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada
225 Metcalfe Street, Suite 311
Ottawa ON K2P 1P9
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As a member of your Co-operative you are part of the Co-operative Movement with:
- 2000 units in Nova Scotia,
- 76,000 housing units in Canada,
- a part of the 350 Co-operatives in Nova Scotia with 200,000 members with a business volume of $1.4 billion
- a part of the 9,000 Co-operatives in Canada with 15 million members,
- a part of the 1 million Co-operatives around the world with 2 billion members.

2. YOUR CO-OPERATIVE AND THE CO-OPERATIVE ACT

- Your Co-operative is incorporated and registered under the Co-operatives Act of Nova Scotia which is administered by the Co-operatives Branch of the Department of Economic Development.

- The very first Co-operative business in North America had it's beginnings in Stellarton in 1861. Even as far back as 1835 a Mutual Insurance Co-operatives operated in Halifax. The first legislation to administer Co-operatives was passed by Parliament in 1904. The present legislation and first administrator of Co-operatives, RJ Mac Sween, was appointed in 1936.

- The Act requires the Co-operative
  a. to follow the Co-operative basic principles including one member one vote, operations at cost, limited return on investments, benefits accrue to members in proportion to the business done with the Co-operative;
  b. Board of Directors manage the affairs of the Co-operative;
  c. members elect a Board to manage the Co-operative, appoint an outside auditor to review the business on their behalf and assure member's interests are upheld.

  The Co-operatives Act requires the Board of Directors be responsible for the Co-operatives operations as Trustees of the members and those who do business with the Co-operative. The Board will assure that meetings of the Board and members are held regularly to discuss and review the performance of the Co-operative and it's officers. The Board has the authority to exclude members who break policies of the Co-operative, approve new members, hire the manager, secretary, treasurer and appoint committees.

  Members of the Co-operative are entitled to:
  a. A copy of the bylaws (Reg. 5)
  b. Annual report of the co-operative which includes auditors report, operating statement and balance sheet at the Co-operatives year end. (41(2)).
  c. Their members equity statement within six months of the year end (R. 3)
  d. View the Co-operatives Act and regulations at the Co-operative's office during normal business hours. (R5)
  e. View the minutes of the last annual general meeting kept at the office of the Co-operative (31(6))
  f. Receive a notice of the annual or special general meeting (R.14, 30(4))
  g. View the register of members unless restricted by a general meeting (24 (2))
  h. A notice of the intent of an extraordinary resolution (R. 18)
  i. A hearing from general membership meeting to explain why he/she should not be excluded from membership (29(2)).

  Members have the responsibility to:
  a. Elect the Board of Directors
  b. Decide who votes when membership is jointly held
  c. Purchase shares or member loans or a security deposit as required by bylaws
  d. Appoint the auditor (40) or authorize a non-audit (40)
  e. Remove an auditor (40)

Anyone who has custody of funds or goods e.g. treasurer, manager or officers are required to give a bond with corporate security against possible loss. The Co-operative shall pay the costs of the bond. (R31)

For more information about you and the Co-operatives Act you may contact the Co-operatives Branch, obtain the publication Co-operatives and the Law or visit the Co-operative web site: www.gov.ns.ca/ecor/ced/coop

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3. YOU AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

- Most housing Co-operatives in Nova Scotia have an operating agreement with CMHC which is administered by the Department of Housing and Municipal Affairs.

- The Department provides assistance to Co-operatives and its members to help defray housing costs of members with low incomes.

- The Department, through its four regions, provides ongoing support and assistance to Boards, Officers and management in their goals of creating a Co-operative home environment.

- Co-operatives and members may request the assistance of the Department in calculating their income to determine the level of assistance available to deserving members.

- The Department has qualified property assessment officers who can assist your Co-operative to determine property maintenance needs.

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360 Prince St., Provincial Building, Sydney, NS B1P 5L1
Regional Director: Cyril LeBlanc ..... leblancj@gov.ns.ca

Central Regional Office ..... Tel: (902)755-5065 Fax: (902)752-7133
176 Archimedes St., New Glasgow, NS B2H 5E5
Regional Manager: Tom Moore ..... mooredt@gov.ns.ca

Metro Regional Office ..... Tel:(902)424-5110 Fax: (902)835-9141
Bedford Towers, Suite 304, Bedford, B4A 1E5
Regional Manager: Harold Dillon ..... dillonhl@gov.ns.ca

Western Regional Office ..... Tel:(902)825-3481 Fax: (902)825-6560
166 Commercial Street, Middleton, BOS 1PO
Regional Director: Gordon MacPherson ..... macphegm@gov.ns.ca

4. YOU AND THE RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES ACT

Introduction:

- You are responsible to care for your unit and to pay your occupancy charges monthly.
- The Act outlines the rights and obligations of the landlord (Co-operative) and the tenants (member)
- Members are entitled to a copy of the Act from the Board.
- There is a standard lease that applies to all members which is available to members and must be signed by the Co-operative representative and the member.
- Members are required to provide the Co-operative with the names of other people who live or are going to live in the unit.
- The Co-operative can make rules for the premises and these must be provided to a member before the lease is signed.
- The Co-operative can request post-dated cheques.
- The Co-operative or member may give notice to quit (leave) their unit. The notice must be written, signed by the Co-operative's representative or member, describe the premises and the day on which the tenancy is to terminate. The notice given must be 3 months prior to termination or 1 month if a medical certificate is provided.
- Only 15 days written notice to quit is required if the member is 30 days in arrears. If the member poses a risk to the safety or security of the landlord or other members, a 5 day notice will suffice. No reason for notice is required to be given by either party.
- Members are not allowed to sub lease a unit without approval of the Co-operative.
- A security deposit may be required by the Co-operative which cannot be more than one half of one month's rent. No other deposits are permitted by law. The deposit may be claimed or returned with a set interest rate within 10 days of the end of the tenancy and if returned should be mailed to the member's new address.
- The Co-operative is required to keep the premises in a good state of repair and comply with all laws respecting health, safety and housing.
- Members are not responsible for maintenance or repairs except for damage caused by negligence or misuse. The member cannot withhold rent for any reason.
- The Co-operative cannot interrupt the supply of heat when it is included in the monthly housing charge.
- Rules can be established by the Co-operative relating to pets and members.
- The Co-operative's representative can enter the member's unit when invited by the member or during daylight hours with a 24 hour notice or when a notice to quit has been given and the Co-operative's representative wishes to show the unit to a prospective member.
- The Co-operative may sell a members abandoned belongings with permission from the Director of Residential Tenancies and apply the money toward monthly charges or damages.
- Monthly charges can only be increased on the anniversary date of the members tenancy. At least four months notice is required. There is no limit to the increase.
- If the member cannot resolve a tenancy concern with the Co-operative they may file a complaint with the Director, accompanied by a $10 fee.
- If a mediation procedure fails, a hearing may be called to resolve the situation. An appeal from the officers decision may be made to the Residential Tenancies Board or then to the Supreme Court on a question of law or jurisdiction.
- More detail is available from the Residential Tenancies Act or through an Access Nova Scotia office in your area. Call 1-800-225-8227 to find the nearest office.

5. YOU AND THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Housing Co-operatives usually have too many owners for all of them to participate in helping make business decisions. So the owners elect a few people who they feel can best make most decisions for them. This leadership is called the Board of Directors.

The Board's most important function is to direct the affairs of the Co-operative. In carrying out this responsibility, the Board performs several important roles.

1. The Board provides leadership to the Co-operative by holding effective meetings, assess pertinent data, determines the policies that direct management and committee members towards desired results;
2. Determines what results give the members the benefits they expect;
3. Sets limitations on staff so the organization is effectively under the control of the Board and member;
4. Establishes an effective relationship between the manager, committee members and others closely associated with the Co-operative e.g. CMHC, Residential Tenancy Boards and others;
5. Assures the Board processes and meetings are effective and responsible; and
6. Assures the manager and committees are operating effectively.

The Board communicates effectively with their members and other associated with the Co-operative so members are not surprised about the results the Co-operative gets.

Focusing on the results expected to effectively serve the members and meet the legal requirements of the Co-operative is the critical first role of the Board. The Board delegates the processes to management and committees who report their results to the Board. The mission the Board establishes focuses on the difference and benefits the Co-operative makes on the life of members and the community in which the Co-operative lives.

The Board must be "in control" of the Co-operative by keeping the Co-operative "under control" as opposed to having the Co-operative "out of control". The Board sets the limits beyond which the manager, committees and staff cannot go. These limits are set down as policies of the Board e.g. members accounts will not go beyond one month, the budget must be followed, the Co-operative will always generate a surplus or break even, the units should always be 90 percent occupied or better.

The relationship between the Board, Manager, Committees, Members and partners is most important. This can most effectively be accomplished by designing strong, powerful management positions. The Board's responsibility is to continually assess the performance of the manager and the committees which should report through the manager. This can effectively be done by asking discerning questions of the manager and the committees. The Board defines the standards and evaluates the results through manager reports, committee reports, audits and inspections of the results expected. Listening to members is another effective way to assure the performance expected is being met.

Effective and productive board meetings is the process by which the Board meets its mandate of being a trustee to members and its legal responsibility to look after the best interests of the Co-operative. The Board only has power when it is in meeting. The President and Board members have no authority outside meetings except when specifically directed by the Board meeting. The Board should ask the following four questions:

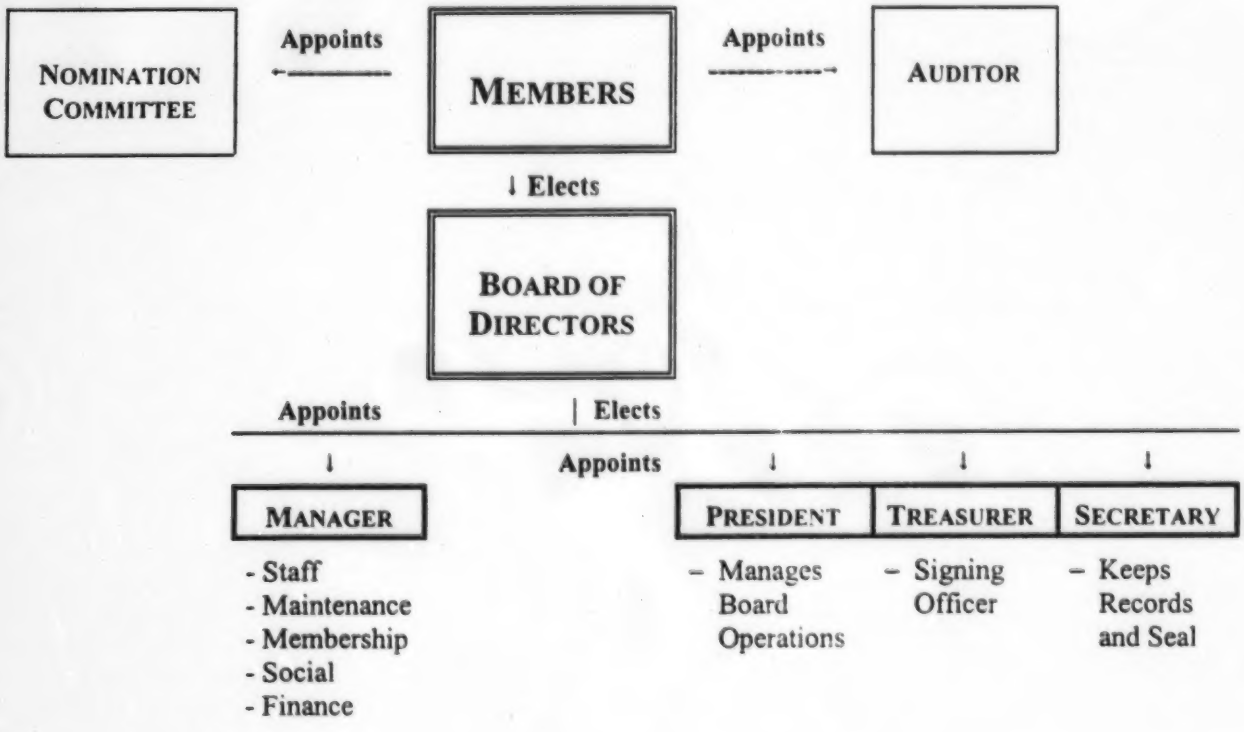
1. Is the Board providing good governance?
2. Is the Board's role as a trustee being fulfilled?
3. Does the Board's job description define the values added by the position?
4. Does the Board's performance contribute to worthwhile results, good management performance, good governing policies, improved value of ownership by the members.

The Board meets for only an hour or so a month and cannot do nor should they do the work to make the Co-operative operate effectively. The Board defines what results are required and delegates these responsibilities to a manager. If the Co-operative cannot afford a full time manager the Board established committees who operate like staff and report to the Board which operates like a manager.

The Board also appoints others to do staff functions, if there is no paid manager, such as the treasurer and the secretary. The President is not the supervisor of staff or committees but the guardian of what the Board is doing. The Secretary becomes the guardian of what the Board has done and as such keeps the minutes and legal papers secure.

Each year the members assess the performance of the directors at the annual or special meetings. If the results or performance is not up to the members expectations they have the responsibility to change the directors and replace them with members who they believe can make a difference.

For further information about the role of directors members can refer to the publication "Boards that Make a Difference" by Carver - or "What Are Co-operatives" - available from the Co-operatives Branch.



6. THE CARE OF YOUR HOUSING UNIT

Appliances

Refrigerator

Defrosting

If your refrigerator is not an automatic defrost (frost-free) type it should be defrosted when the ice gets approximately 1/4" thick. Defrosting keeps operating costs at a minimum. To defrost the unit, remove all contents of the freezer, chest, and chiller drawer, then turn the temperature control to defrost. When all frost has melted, turn the control back to its original position. Do not remove frost with a sharp instrument. Never use an electric kettle to defrost the refrigerator since plastics melt and considerable damage to the interior of the unit may result.

Cleaning

Never use gritty soaps, abrasive or heavy-duty cleaners, or steel wool on any part of the refrigerator. Before cleaning turn the temperature control off. Wash the interior of the refrigerator with warm water and a baking soda solution (2 tablespoons to a quart of water) or mild sudsy water; rinse, and dry. Ice trays should be washed with warm sudsy water, not with hot or abrasive cleaners. The door seal should be cleaned with mild soap and water or the soda solution described above. The exterior of the refrigerator can usually be cleaned simply by wiping with a damp cloth.

Frost-Free Refrigerators

This type of refrigerator will have a grill on the front at the floor level. Check this grill periodically and clear it of lint, using a brush or vacuum cleaner attachment. At least twice a year remove the grill and clean the area behind it with a vacuum cleaner. At the same time remove and clean the evaporator pan.

Before Calling for Service

- Is the cord firmly plugged into the wall outlet?
- Has a fuse blown or the circuit breaker tripped?
- If it is a frost-free model, is the front grill fee of lint or dirt?

Range

Cleaning

Be sure to turn off controls before cleaning. Do not use, or spill, oven cleaner on metal trim. Never use gritty soaps, abrasive cleaners, steel wool or other scouring pads on painted surfaces. Do not use sharp instruments such as a knife or razor blade to clean surfaces.

The exterior of the range can be cleaned by wiping up spills at once with a paper towel. When the surface cools it may be cleaned with a damp, sudsy cloth and then wiped with a dry one. The control panel can be cleaned in the same manner.

The oven capillary tube, which is loaded inside the oven is the temperature sensing unit. It is not removable and is probably the most fragile part of your oven. It should be wiped gently after using oven cleaner so the cleaner does not build up and cause false temperature readings.

Do not use aluminum foil in the oven. The heat balance is disturbed when this is done and the food will not cook evenly. In addition, if the foil touches the bake unit or receptacle, it may fuse the unit and damage it.

IMPORTANT: The oven will not cook if the oven timer has been left on automatic. Be sure to reset the control to "manual" or "normal" after using the automatic timer.

Before Calling for Service

- ~ It is the electrical cord plugged firmly into the wall outlet?
- ~ Has a fuse blown in the range or main electrical panel or has a circuit breaker tripped?
- ~ Has the surface element been installed properly?
- ~ If oven doesn't heat, are the controls property set?

Clothes Washer

After each use leave the lid open until all moisture is completely gone. Hand-scrubbing or scouring should never be necessary. The porcelain and enamel surfaces of the washer will not stand harsh soaps, lye, scouring power or pads, or acids. You can keep the exterior of your washer clean and bright just by wiping it off with a damp cloth. The surface should be kept free of washing compound and suds which might drip onto it in use.

Before Calling for Service

- ~ Are all controls set correctly?
- ~ Is the electrical cord plugged firmly into the outlet?
- ~ Are the faucets turned on?
- ~ Is the drain hole clear so that water can pass through?

Clothes Dryer

To protect the finish of the dryer unit, wipe it clean with a damp cloth. Do not use abrasive cleaners.

IMPORTANT: Clean the lint trap after each use.

Wipe out the inside of the clothes dryer to remove excess lint. Also, wipe off the inside of the door and loading/opening area with a damp cloth.

Before Calling for Service

- ~ Is the electrical cord firmly plugged into the outlet?
- ~ Is the door firmly shut? The dryer will not operate if the door is ajar.
- ~ Are the controls set properly?

Asphalt

Asphalt driveways, parking areas, sidewalks, etc. can be seriously damaged if gasoline, oil, or other petroleum materials are spilled on them. If such materials are spilled on these surfaces they should be washed immediately with water.

Burning leaves, trash and other debris on asphalt will damage it. Never place sharp objects, such as motorcycle stands or lawn furniture, on asphalt surfaces as these can cause holes.

Common Areas

Laundry Rooms/Storage Rooms, Lounges etc.

You are asked to help keep these areas as clean as possible. In addition, any incidence of vandalism should be reported to the Board or Management immediately. You are also asked to help the Board or Management keep the doors in these areas locked during the times required.

Concrete

Rapid deterioration or flaking of concrete surfaces can be caused by the careless use of de-icing salts. Do not use de-icing materials containing ammonium nitrate or ammonium sulphate. Check the contents of the de-icing package before applying the material to concrete driveways, walks, steps, etc.

Condensation

Considerable amounts of moisture are produced by normal household activities such as cooking, showers, and clothes washing. Particularly during winter months, this moisture builds up in the air and is unable to escape from the house. Often the moisture will condense and cause dripping on windows or on cold spots on ceilings and walls. Excessive moisture in the air may also produce mildew and bacteria growth in corners, etc.

The most effective way to deal with condensation problems is to reduce the excess moisture in the air. You can do this by opening windows for short times to allow an air exchange in the home. If moisture problems persist, contact the Board or Management so that the problem can be checked out.

Electric Heat

For best results from electric heaters, vacuum the heaters occasionally to remove dust from around them. Avoid placing large pieces of furniture where they will block radiation and restrict air flow in front of the heating units. Hang draperies clear of baseboard heaters so you don't prevent air flow.

Electrical Systems

The wiring in your Co-operative unit is designed to meet code requirements and safety standards. It will accommodate the normal number of household appliances. Larger appliances such as air conditioners sometimes require separate circuits for their operation. If you own or plan to purchase an appliance of this type, be sure to check with the Board or Management to determine if the electrical system will accommodate it.

Electrical Safety Devices

The wiring and equipment in your unit is protected by fuses or circuit breakers located in the main electrical panel. Never use pennies or substitute fuses of a higher amperage for those that have been installed. A fire could result. Fuses are also installed in an electric range and should be checked if part of the range does not function properly.

Circuit Breakers

A breaker is a switch located in the main electrical panel. If a breaker trips, it must be reset in a manner similar to a light switch. A breaker may have been tripped as a result of an overload on the circuit or faulty wiring in an appliance, etc. Before resetting the breaker, these appliances should be disconnected. If the breaker continues to trip there may be a fault in the circuit's wiring, and the Board or Management should be advised immediately.

Elevators

The installation of elevators is covered by several codes which are stringently enforced. Elevators in housing Co-operatives are serviced regularly and inspected annually by provincial inspectors. If the elevator malfunctions while you are in it:

- Check to see that the red button or switch marked "Emergency Stop" is in "run position". Sometimes passengers will hit this switch accidently.
- Push the button marked "D.O." If you are at a landing this may open the door.
- If there is a cabinet marked "telephone,"open the door and pick up the receiver. Follow the instructions on the inside of the cabinet to call for assistance.
- Push the alarm button. This will usually cause a loud bell to sound. Do this at two-minute intervals until someone comes to your assistance.
- It may be possible to open the door of the car by hand.
- Don't attempt to leave the car by an emergency exit in the ceiling without help. The safest thing to do is remain in the elevator until help arrives.

Never use the elevator when there is a fire in the building.

Fans

Be sure to turn the fan off before cleaning or removing the filter

The mesh filter in the kitchen range hood fan should be cleaned regularly to reduce the fire hazard and to keep the fan up to its maximum power. Clean the filter by placing it in hot, sudsy water and then rinsing it. Fan blades and motor can be cleaned with a damp cloth, but don't immerse them in water.

Floors

Carpets

Carpeting should be vacuumed regularly as required - at least once weekly. Such cleaning prolongs the life of a carpet and delays the need for wet shampooing.

Spot Removal

Act quickly when anything is dropped or spilled to remove spots and stains before they dry up or set. Two cleaning materials can be safely used on most carpets. One is a teaspoonful of neutral detergent such as Tide, Ajax, etc. and one teaspoonful of white vinegar mixed in a quart of water. Vinegar is a weak acid and will serve to neutralize any alkaline materials. The other is a solvent-type dry-cleaning fluid. If you cannot identify a spot or stain or your carpet, use this cleaning procedure:

1. Remove excess materials. In the case of liquids, absorb them with a clean white cloth or facial tissue. If semi-solid, scrap with a knife or use a sponge.
2. Apply the detergent/vinegar solution. Use a clean cloth and wipe gently from the edge of the soiled area towards the centre. At intervals, blot with a dry, clean cloth to absorb excess solution.
3. Dry the carpet.
4. Apply the dry-cleaning fluid, wiping gently and working from the edges of the spot or stain towards the centre.

An inside doormat is an excellent way to keep dirt off you carpet.

Tile Floors

Tile floors should be swept, and washed when necessary with a solution cleaner in lukewarm water. Avoid using strong cleaners. After washing, rinse the floor with clean, cold water to remove cleaning residue and then allow it to dry thoroughly after washing.

Vinyl floors should receive regular applications of floor polish to prevent excessive surface soil. Periodically, use a good wax remover on tile floors to avoid a heavy wax build-up which will yellow and ultimately ruin the floor.

Rubber-heal marks can be removed by rubbing them with a steel wool pad containing no soap. Food stains can be removed by rubbing them with steel wool moistened with a cleaner. A small amount of a cleaner such as Ajax, Comet or Bon Ami with a steel wool pad should be used on very stubborn stains. In all cases, rinse and dry after scrubbing.

Additional Suggestions

Use only self-polishing water wax or vinyl floor polish. Do not use paste wax or wax containing petroleum solvents, cleaning agents containing caustic strong soaps and powders, or solvents such as gasoline, turpentine, kerosene, or benzene. All resilient floors will mark if exposed to heavy loads. Non-staining casters and glides are needed to provide adequate protection.

On new floors allow sufficient time for the tile to set before washing. This may take from a week to ten days. Sweep them daily with a soft broom during this period.

Never use sweeping compounds that contain free fat, oils or chemicals on asphalt tile as they will soften the tile and muddy its appearance. Coatings such as shellac, lacquer, or varnish or plastic finishes are not recommended for resilient floors. They may permanently injure the floor. Some sheet vinyl flooring materials don't require waxing. Check with the Board or Management to determine whether or not the type installed in your unit should be waxed.

Furnaces

Oil Fired

Many single-family Co-operative housing units are equipped with individual furnaces. These units are normally oil-fired and use either hot forced air or hot water as the heating medium.

Thermostat Settings

Both of these systems are normally controlled by a central thermostat although it is possible to have more than one zone in a hot water heated home. Thermostats should be set at approximately 20°C(70°F) during the day, and turned back to 17°C(65°F) at night.

Maintenance

The furnace area should be kept clear at all times. Never adjust the controls on the furnace itself since they are preset and should not be altered. Furnaces are serviced annually by the Co-operative's service contract.

Warm air furnaces are normally equipped with filters designed to filter dirt and dust from the air. For efficient heating, replace these filters at the beginning of each heating season and, for maximum efficiency, replace them at least once during the season.

Objects such as furniture and draperies should not be placed over registers (either hot or cold air return).

Some hot air furnaces are also equipped with humidifiers. In most cases these have been disconnected by the housing Co-operative as they are difficult to maintain and, in fact, have been known to cause damage to the furnace itself. Don't reconnect these units. If additional moisture is needed in the unit, some other means of supplying it should be used.

If your furnace fails to operate properly, notify the Board or Management at once. However, before you do so check the following:

- Is the thermostat set above room temperature?
- Is the main electrical switch turned on?
- Check fuses or circuit breakers.
- Check for clogged filters.
- Try to reset switch on the furnace, but try it only once.

Grounds

You are responsible for the maintenance and care of the grounds that are part of your unit. It is your responsibility to ensure that:

- all landscaped areas are watered, raked, mowed, and otherwise kept clean of all debris at all times.
- trees and shrubs located on the property are properly cared for.
- all ice and snow is removed from sidewalks. This can include public sidewalks immediately adjacent to the home. If you don't keep these areas clean, you might be sued if someone injures himself/herself as a result of falling on your icy sidewalk, etc.
- Driveways and parking areas immediately adjacent to your unit are also your responsibility. Unlicenced or immobile vehicles are not allowed to be stored on the grounds and will be towed away. Vehicle repairs, other than those of a very minor nature are not permitted.

Kitchen Cabinets & Countertops

Wood cabinets should be treated just like any other good wood furniture. Clean them with the same cleaners and polishers that you would use on other wood products. Laminated plastic cabinet tops such as formica may be cleaned by washing with a mild soap and water.

Countertops are made of high-pressure laminated plastic and are not harmed by ordinary solvents, alcohol, boiling water, acids, or alkaline. They can withstand heat up to 275°F, but cooking utensils that have been removed from the oven or range top should not be placed directly on the countertop since these are normally hotter than 275°F. Countertops should never be used as a cutting surface. If the Co-operative has to replace your countertop because you damaged it, you may be charged for the cost of the work.

Pest Control

Normally, three types of insects invade units: ones that are destructive to buildings, ones that are a menace to health, and ones that are just a nuisance. It is almost impossible to control all insects all of the time. A number of insects such as ants have a short life span. They originate outside and migrate into the dwelling at certain times of the year.

Most kinds of roaches can be controlled by insecticides available at the supermarket. Good housekeeping can prevent an infestation of roaches from getting started. Also, the proper storage and disposal of such items as flour can prevent grain beetles from becoming a nuisance.

If an insect infestation gets beyond your control, notify the Co-operative Management or Board immediately so that professional help can be obtained.

If any quantity of insects is found within your unit, it is a good idea to collect a specimen or two in a bottle or envelope for later identification.

Plumbing Fixtures

Sinks, Toilet and Bathtubs

To clean these fixtures, use a mild soap and water with a sponge or cloth, then rinse with clear water and polish with a dry cloth. A mild cleaning compound can be used for more stubborn stains; however, avoid using harsh gritty compounds or removing deposits with a knife or razor blade. These may damage the glaze. If the fixture leaks, contact the Board or Management as soon as possible.

Do not drop refuse, toys, sanitary napkins, cotton, facial tissues, disposable diapers, combs or toothbrushes into a toilet. They may cause a stoppage. Don't deposit fatty substances such as bacon fat in sink drains. You will have to cover the cost of clearing stoppages caused by such items.

Water Heater

If your unit has an individual water heater, trip the safety release valve every two or three months to be certain that it will operate if needed. This will keep the valve from corroding. The valve is intended as a safety feature to prevent damage from excessive pressure and temperature.

If your unit is equipped with an individual hot water tank, drain a few quarts of water from the bottom of the tank every couple of months to prevent discoloration and to keep sediment from accumulating in the bottom of the tank.

If your water heater fails, check the fuses or circuit breakers to ensure that they have not been tripped, before you contact your housing Co-operative.

Automatic Washers and Dryers
The housing Co-operative is not responsible for supplying and installing electrical and plumbing hookups for automatic washers and dryers belonging to the tenants. These installations are your responsibility. Before undertaking such installations, contact the housing Co-operative to receive authorization for the connections and to obtain any special instructions. These installations must be carried out by a qualified tradesman for your safety and for the protection of the housing Co-operative.

Telephone Installation
It is up to you to place your order for telephone service with the local telephone company office. Most housing units already have the wiring installed for telephones.

Telephone Cable

Many projects located in urban areas have been prewired for cable and telephone. Arrangements for cable television differ from housing Co-operative to housing Co-operative. Usually payment is made directly by the member to the cable television firm. Consult with your Board or Management to find out the arrangement for your particular project.

Utility Connection and Disconnection

When utilities are individually metered in your name, it is your responsibility to arrange for connection by the power corporation. When you move from the unit you must arrange for the power to be disconnected. Please let your Board know.

Walls

Most painted surfaces in housing units are washable with a mild detergent and water. Marks from ballpoint pens, crayons and felt markers are, however, almost impossible to wash away. Therefore, care should be taken to ensure that wall surfaces are not marked with these instruments.

Furniture should be kept at least three inches from the walls in order to avoid scratches and marks. Before hanging pictures or other objects on the wall of your unit find out from your Management or Board what type of hanger you can use. Do not try to repaint your unit without contacting the Board, which will advise you of the painting arrangements and schedule. In addition, the Board does not permit wallpaper to be applied in its units. Don't apply wallpaper, adhesive coverings such as Mactac, or decals to wall surfaces.

7. Security and Fire Safety

Security Rules
The following security rules should be followed by all members of Co-operative housing.

- Keep emergency numbers close to your telephone
- If you are going to be away from home for any length of time notify your neighbors and the Manager
- Use night locks, peepholes, and safety chains. Never completely unlock a door without knowing who is there.
- Report to the Manager or police any unfamiliar people loitering in the building, or anyone carrying out unusual activities.
- Ensure that your door is always locked. Check your windows as well before going to bed.
- Spare keys should be left with a neighbor.
- If you are going away for several days or weeks, have your mail delivery suspended, or at least picked up by a neighbor.

- ~ Have household items and valuables marked for easy identification in case they are stolen.
- ~ Never leave large sums of cash in your unit. If robbed, do not resist.
- ~ Children should be warned about child molesters and sex offenders in language that they understand.
- ~ If your building is equipped with an intercom, make visitors identify themselves before allowing them access to your building. Only authorized individuals should be allowed in.
- ~ Do not wedge open building entrance doors that are supposed to be locked.

Fire Safety

The Smoke Alarm

The purpose of the smoke detector is to warn you initially of a smoke build-up or possible Fire. Under the normal conditions caused by the presence of sufficient smoke, the smoke detector will sound and continue to sound while such conditions last, or until the alarm is turned off.

The smoke alarm may sound for a number of other reasons, as well:

- ~ a mechanical failure in the smoke detector.
- ~ excessive smoke caused by a number of people smoking.
- ~ food burned on a kitchen range, toaster, or electrical appliance.
- ~ tampering with the unit or accidental striking of the unit.
- ~ Inadequate maintenance of the smoke detector.

If the Alarm Sounds

Immediately check to see if there is a fire in your dwelling. If there is a fire, leave immediately and pull a fire alarm station in the hallway. Close the suite door behind you.

If there is no fire, try to determine what caused the alarm to go off. Silence the alarm, open a window and the hallway door to clear the air. The alarm should then reset itself.

If the alarm does not silence when the room has been aired out, contact the Manager on duty. If the Manager is not available call the local fire department.

If you are awakened from sleep by the smoke alarm leave your dwelling immediately; do not wait - get out. If there is smoke, stoop low or crawl on the floor to the suite door. Do not stand up. Once out, close the door behind you and sound the alarm.

If you do not see smoke, go back into the suite and carry out the various checks noted above.

Don't take chances.

Important Points

The smoke alarm in your suite not automatically sound the main fire alarm, and fire trucks will not respond. It is there to warn you.

If there is a fire, the fire alarm in the building will only be activated if a pull station in the hallway is pulled or if the smoke detectors in the hallways are activated.

The detector is not infallible. This type of alarm will give you considerably more protection than you would have without it but its value depends on how you use it.

Fire Escape Planning

The danger from fire is always present. To avoid tragedy, be aware of the risk and know what to do in an emergency.

Your building is considered as fire-safe as modern buildings can be under present day building codes, with many fire detecting and fire protective features. It should not, however, be considered "fire proof"; many of the interior furnishings and contents are combustible and capable of producing dangerous volumes of smoke and toxic gasses.

Know you fire department emergency phone number

Caution Some cleaning materials and solvents can be very dangerous if you don't use them or store them properly. Cooking oils can cause an immediate fire which is difficult to control. Think and be on the defensive.

Plan Your Escape

Evacuation plans and procedures vary for each building. Preplan now what to do according to posted fire emergency instructions.

Do not use the elevators. They may not be accessible or may stop if the power fails. Use your fire exits. Each floor should have an easy alternate fire exit in case access to one is cut off. Be able to find the exits even in darkness. Know where the stairs go.

Exit doors protect you only if they are kept closed. They should never be blocked open or obstructed.

Once outside, do not risk re-entering the building. Stay clear of the entry so that firefighters may enter. Be familiar with the fire alarm, exits and fire extinguishing equipment. If you see, smell, hear or suspect a fire, act quickly. Be familiar with the special evacuation procedure for your building.

Feel doors before opening them. If they are hot, or smoke is seeping out - don't open them.

If a fire in a hallway blocks your way to fire exits, close your apartment door, seal off cracks around the door and vents to keep out smoke, and open a window at top and bottom for ventilation. Hang out a sheet to signal for help. Do not panic or jump. Wait for help to arrive.

A Board is responsible for letting you know what procedures to be taken if a fire occurs. A Board is also responsible for maintaining all fire protection equipment within the property.

Heat Detectors

Apartments in multiple units projects are normally equipped with heat detection devices as well as smoke alarms. These heat detectors are designed to activate fire alarm systems in the building if there is a build-up of heat in your unit. Heat detectors should never be painted, covered or blocked in any other manner.

Sprinkler Systems

Some multi-level buildings are equipped with sprinkler systems. Storage rooms in some multiple units are also equipped with these devices. They are heat sensitive and are triggered when there is a build-up of heat in the immediate area. Sprinkler pipes or heads should never be used to support or hang items. Be careful not to hit or strike the sprinkler head as they may cause the system to turn on. Extensive water damage may be caused to a unit from a malfunctioning sprinkler system.